

Values, Culture & Spirituality:
**Ecosystems Restoration
Conversation Guide**



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Center for
Earth Ethics



UNITED RELIGIONS
INITIATIVE

Values, Culture & Spirituality:

ECOSYSTEMS RESTORATION CONVERSATION GUIDE

In 2022, the Center for Earth Ethics convened consultations in five parts of the world to learn about how different groups of people were cooperating to restore harmed ecosystems and hurting communities. Rooted in the wisdom gained from the consultations organized by the Center for Earth Ethics to support the United Nations Decade on Ecosystem Restoration, this guidebook has been created by the United Religions Initiative (URI) and the Center for Earth Ethics (CEE) to help faith communities around the world restore their communities and their ecosystems. It includes a case study from each of the five consultations (pages 7–11), and illustrates an approach to collaborative ecosystem restoration work that centers values, culture and spirituality.

Human Nature: A Culture of Caring

The elements: earth (land), water, fire and air bring substance and form to our understanding of the divine. Our religious traditions and spiritual expressions call us not only to care for the natural world but to learn from it, and to be in relationship with it as a source of reverence, life and beauty. Modernity and capitalism have encouraged us to think and act as individuals, but as a species, we know that we are woven interdependently within Earth's living systems. Indigenous knowledge and our faith traditions continually call us back to the wisdom of reciprocity and caring as the way to create balanced and peaceful relationships with one another and all of life. When we recognize ourselves as part of nature, we remember that we have always belonged to a much bigger, more ancient story. Together, we are stronger, more creative, and more resilient. Earth restoration, therefore, is a spiritual act. Caring for Earth moves us away from isolation and toward belonging and relatedness.



Our Climate Crisis, Earth Restoration

This guidebook assumes that nature has value in and of itself. Life in all forms is valuable and worthy of protection. Just like humans, the rights of nature need to be upheld.

Conversations about restoring ecosystems often focus on mitigating the climate crisis. While it is true that protecting ecosystems will help us keep carbon emissions beneath the 1.5°C threshold, when we only consider ecosystems as carbon-catching tools, we perpetuate the misunderstanding that ecosystems are objects and that we get to manipulate them endlessly for our own needs and benefits.

To truly regenerate Earth, we must dramatically change our relationship with the land and water. And that's not all! ***Our lived experience shows us that as much as we need to repair our relationship with Earth, we must also repair and improve relationships with each other.*** Wherever there is a polluted river or landscape littered with trash or broken by mining, there is usually a community of people who have been exploited and degraded as well. We cannot ignore the relationship between the degradation of people and the degradation of ecosystems, nor can we hope to restore ecosystems unless we address the racism, classism, sexism, and colonialism that have facilitated the damage done in our world and to one another. We are only able to honestly practice healthy and life-affirming behaviors after we make the time to acknowledge and repair historic harms. These issues are inter-related and require our dedicated care.

Values, Culture & Spirituality are the Heart of Restoration

The more we relate to nature through the lens of values, culture, and spirituality, the deeper and more sustained our actions can be. ***What do we value?*** Relationships. Acts of restoration help us to see, appreciate and mend the relationships needed to help a system thrive. ***Who are we culturally?*** Our culture includes our language, our food, our songs, and the land we call home. Globalization can pull us away from these things in ways that can be isolating or disconnecting. Restoration calls us back to our roots. ***How are we honoring spiritual wisdom?*** Ecosystem restoration moves us beyond our individual needs and towards a deeper connection with the land, water, and all that grows and lives there. Spiritual practice teaches us the importance of waiting, listening and asking permission. To fully restore a degraded place, we must listen to one another while honoring Earth's natural cycles. Our spiritual growth is fed by healthy relationships and caring for all living beings with integrity. In these ways ecosystem restoration celebrates the values, culture and spirituality present in our communities. When we restore Earth, we heal ourselves, one another, and all beings. Let's put our values, culture, and spirituality to work!

Steps for Hosting Consultations

Restoration happens best in a group and conversations are the first step in planning life-changing projects. Although it may lead to a community decision for restoring the ecosystem, this consultation is not about planning a restoration project. ***This gathering is about what needs to be remembered, honored and thoughtfully considered before further action is taken.*** This guidebook aims to be multi-faith, multi-disciplinary, and inclusive of all members of the communities where we live. The following 5-step process, along with the case studies, are suggestions to support faith groups in their restoration efforts locally, and worldwide.

1

Step One

Ask “What happened here?” and “What is happening?”

The word “ecosystem” can describe an entire mountain range or desert as well as smaller areas, like a beach or vegetable garden. Restoration efforts of every size are important. Before we can make a restoration plan, we need to consider the history and context of the place. There is always a story of events and choices that led to a river being polluted or farmland being degraded. ***To know how to properly heal something, we need to understand the depth of the wounds that were inflicted and how the ones who are on the land—both presently and historically—were harmed along the way.*** If we are going to bring restoration to a place, we must bring restoration to the people who live there and who will be the ones doing the work of maintaining its wellbeing. Initial questions and considerations:

1. Which ecosystem near you needs restoration? A river? A forest? Depleted farmland? An abandoned lot? If you are in a city, are there unused spaces that could be made into green spaces?
2. What are the historical issues that led to the ecosystem being degraded? Who or what has been wounded along the way?
3. If you do not know the history already, is there someone you can speak with who does? Where might you learn more about the events and choices that contributed to the present situation?
4. Who or what has been wounded along the way?
5. What efforts are currently underway to take restorative action?

Steps for Hosting Consultations

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Step Two

Ask “Who else needs to be invited?”

The questions in Step One are to help create a landscape analysis of the ecosystem as well as the people who need to be involved in restoration efforts. ***If it is going to have the sustained impact we all want, ecological restoration needs to be inclusive, equitable, and accessible—it is important for a variety of voices and perspectives to be heard.*** We begin by sharing our concern, then listening. We ask questions and listen some more. What matters most is gathering people together to have a conversation that isn't already happening. Here are some considerations and questions to help select 3–7 participants for the initial consultation conversation:

1. Which individuals or groups are already involved in (or living near) the ecosystem you wish to restore?
2. Are there individuals or groups who need to be included but are not yet represented?
3. What are the existing or potential conflicts associated with this space? In what ways has the community already attempted to address these challenges?
4. Does the group of invited participants include people who have been most affected by the damaged ecosystem (for example, the ones who historically lived here, women, children, or differently abled, etc.)?
5. Restoration work often brings challenges or disagreements. What shared values, cultural practices or spiritual understandings might help your community feel better connected or supported when conflicts arise or the work is difficult?

3

Step Three

Strengthen Shared Outcomes with Values, Culture & Spirituality

Forming a consultation group in response to the questions in Step One and Step Two will invite relationships with others in the community who offer a variety of perspectives and are also committed to the project. For the initial consultation gathering, 3-7 speakers will help to keep the conversation manageable and provide a solid base to grow the group in the future. Be sure the 3-7 participants are representative in terms of race, ethnicity, age, and gender. Some examples of inclusive, multi-faith and multi-disciplinary participants include:

Consultation partners and invited speakers should include some combination of these roles:

- Indigenous representative, community-based elder, and/or local historian
- Naturalist, Ecologist, local environmental advocate, and/or traditional ecological knowledge-holder
- Community Stakeholder (farmer, businessperson, educator, etc.)
- Local, state, and/or regional government representative
- United Nations and/or other international NGO representative
- Community faith leader, theologian, and/or faith based organization representative

Steps for Hosting Consultations

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Step Four

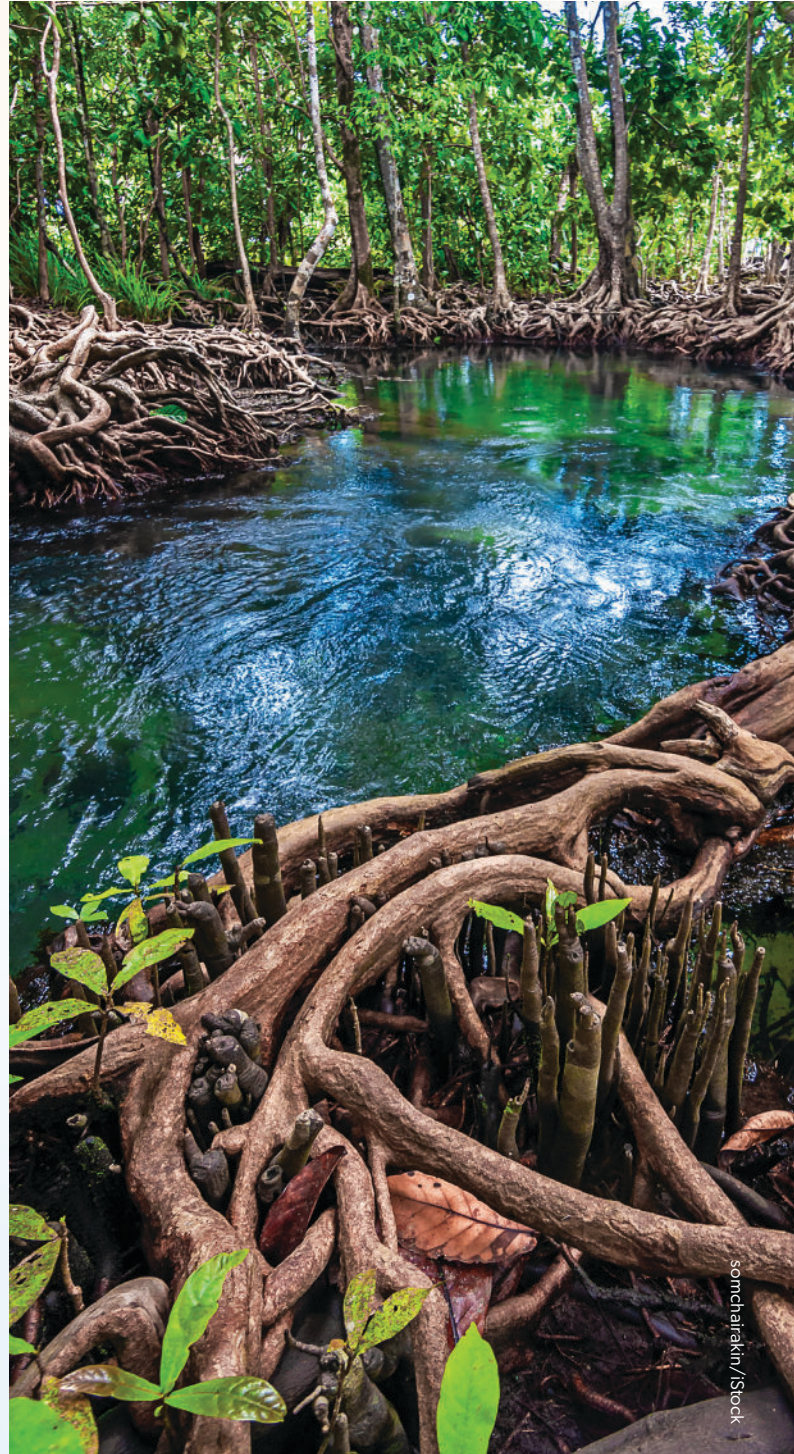
Envisioning Outcomes

Using values, culture and spirituality (see page 3) as a focus for our restoration efforts helps to clarify shared outcomes and to practice truly inclusive community decision-making. Here are some suggested outcomes to consider:

- In order to support Earth's regeneration alongside our community's well-being, we need our restoration efforts to strengthen a local and clean economy.
- In the face of increasing conflicts and suffering, we need our restoration efforts to include a community resilience plan that helps us to: expand climate adaptation practices for food security, increase our disaster readiness and/or deepen our community peacebuilding.
- Our restoration efforts need to include the needs of other species in their own efforts to adapt with our changing climate.

Here are some final questions and considerations to further a community decision-making process that centers values, culture and spirituality:

1. How might this consultation help build or repair broken relationships that will strengthen our community?
2. How might this restoration effort create leadership opportunities for women, youth and others who have been historically missing?
3. How might this consultation help build or repair our local connections in ways that bring more celebration, joy or pride to our community?
4. How might this restoration effort establish more rights and recognition for Nature and all species?
5. What other question is important for your community to ask so that you are celebrating the values, culture and spirituality you share?



Steps for Hosting Consultations

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Step Five

Recommended Consultation Structure

To help think through the important steps of the consultation gathering, this section suggests a 90-minute agenda. If the consultation group is larger (8 people or more), extend the gathering to 2 hours but consider taking a “stretch break” halfway through. Every group is encouraged to adjust the format and style of consultation to best meet the needs of the community.

- **Welcome**

5 MINUTES

Include an interfaith prayer, poem or short guided meditation to help people arrive and focus together.

- **Introductions**

10 MINUTES

Invite each consultation participant to share their name and role in the community, and a 1–2 sentence description of what having a restored/healthy ecosystem means to them.

- **Opening Presentation by Moderator**

5 MINUTES

Introduce the ecosystem and explain that the consultation is inviting a thoughtful conversation about the community’s values, culture and spirituality to create healthy relationships with one another and the ecosystem for today and future generations.

- **Overview Question**

10–20 MINUTES TOTAL; 3 MINUTES EACH

Each speaker is asked to frame the issue from their own perspective/expertise. The moderator should be ready to ask a short follow-up question if the initial answer is too short or if more information is needed. Then move on to explore the questions that can help everyone become more clear of the values, culture and spirituality guiding the community to help focus future action.

For example...

15 MINUTES, 2–4 MINUTES EACH: Share a value, cultural or spiritual practice in this community that can allow us to strengthen relationships and grow trust between one another as faith actors, non-faith actors and all stakeholders involved in caring for this space.

15 MINUTES, 2–4 MINUTES EACH: Summarize a reason or possible obstacle that could make it challenging to restore this ecosystem.

15 MINUTES, 2–4 MINUTES EACH: What, in your opinion, might change for the better if we are able to restore this ecosystem?

- **Gratitude and Closing Remarks by Moderator**

2 MINUTES

Thank each speaker for sharing their perspectives and insights. Lift up something that was shared that affirms a value or spiritually-affirming practice in the community. If it’s appropriate, suggest a next conversation to move toward a decision or planning process for restoring the ecosystem.

Hosting a Consultation

So much of this process is about building community and strengthening relationships. Every consultation done for the Values, Spirituality, and Culture series (the case studies) happened virtually. It was a way of gathering people from around the world. In-person consultations are highly recommended but it can be important to have an online option in order to be as inclusive as possible for the speakers and community members who plan to attend. If the consultation is in-person, we recommend that everyone is seated in a circle to create a feeling of community and equality. We also recommend that you provide simple refreshments and some additional time following the consultation for informal conversation 🌱

Share Your Story!

How did it go?

We would love to hear about your conversation and we want to share your projects across the network of other faith groups who are restoring ecosystems in their communities. To be included on the database, please provide the details of your project here:

[SUBMIT YOUR STORY HERE](#)



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Case Study on AIR

ST. JAMES PARISH, LOUISIANA, USA

THEME *Strengthening the community's decision-making process; establishing human rights and rights for Nature alongside a local, clean economy*

Location & Concern St. James Parish, or, "Cancer Alley," is an 80-mile stretch along the Mississippi River and the location of 150 petrochemical plants and refineries. In addition to respiratory issues for many, and rashes on children who spend a lot of time outside, occurrences of cancer are 50% higher in this region than other parts of the country.

Consultation Partners Rise St. James (Faith-based organization); Ponca Nations (Indigenous activists); Beyond Plastic (NGO); and CIEL (Advocacy).

Analysis

- **Systemic injustice:** the plastic industry heavily tied to the fossil fuel industry which uses its money and power to lobby against regulations.
- **Power imbalance:** regulatory agencies have demonstrated a willingness to listen to the corporations rather than those people who are suffering.
- **Build coalitions:** grassroots strength is built by bringing together a wide array of supporters, non-profits, and agencies to build power and agency.
- **Dismantle lies:** it is important to educate the public about the impacts of heavy industry and fossil fuels in order to dismantle lies such as, "the facilities are good for the economy" or "this is the only path for our community if we want jobs."

- **Reparations & accountability:** there must be money and resources directed to those who have suffered at the hands of corporate negligence; and the polluters must be held to account for the harm they cause to people and planet.

Teachings on Values, Culture & Spirituality

Values: Local and global governments must emphasize clean water, clean air and healthy environments as human rights. Poisoning the Earth is poisoning ourselves.

Culture: Losing one's home to climate changes can be equated to losing a part of one's identity. Preserving and restoring land pays homage to our ancestors and where we came from.

Spirituality: The passion and courage to do what is right can be found through faith.

Lessons Learned & Passed On

1. We cannot and should not differentiate ourselves from nature. Align human law with natural law.
2. Imbalances of power can support classism and racism. We should acknowledge differences but find strength in unity to solve community problems.
3. Pollution (and climate change) transcends racial, economic and social boundaries but some suffer more than others. The work of environmental justice is to bring healing to those who suffer first and worst.
4. Resistance is the first step towards restoration. Creating change begins by learning what is wrong and learning what you can do about it.

This Restoration Effort has:

- Named existing conflicts and helped strengthen the community's decision-making process.
- Created opportunities for youth and women-led collaboration.
- Helped identify related projects that could strengthen the community's economic security.
- Helped to identify additional activities to help the community feel seen and better supported as it feels effects of degraded ecosystems and a changed climate.

UPDATE (January 2024):

Thanks to persistent pressure from advocacy groups such as Rise St. James, Louisiana Bucket Brigade, Healthy Gulf, and many more, a federal judge put a stay on a new petrochemical plant, the Sunshine Project, that would emit 13.6 million tons of greenhouse gases annually. Activists and legal advocates continue their fight to keep more petrochemical plants from being built in the region.

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Case Study on WATER

RIVER YAMUNA, INDIA

THEME *Supporting river and community health; leveraging multilateral support; establishing local, clean economies*

Location & Concern The River Yamuna is being venerated by Hindus worldwide, but is so heavily polluted that no life can exist in it. It begins in the Himalayas and flows to Delhi where the water is diverted and replaced with untreated sewage. The water, containing dangerous levels of toxic chemicals, is used in worship and rituals. Despite high profile campaigns, a resolution hasn't been found.

Consultation Partners UNEP India (UN Agency); the Sri Radha Raman Temple (Faith Group); ICLEI South Asia (local governments representative); environmental advocates and legal counsel (Legal representative).

Analysis

- **Legal continuity:** the River Yamuna passes through different states with their own laws. The Indian Supreme Court makes declarations but local communities need more power and resources to achieve these goals.
- **Urgency & growth:** rapid city growth with little urban planning has led to river, land, and broader ecosystem degradation.
- **Role of religious education & spiritual practice:** respect for Yamuna has been shaped over millennia; urbanization has led to loss of tradition.
- **Competition vs. Cooperation:** faith, economic, and political leaders pursuing power. Companies are given rights, but rights of nature are questioned.

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Teachings on Values, Culture & Spirituality

Values: Faith and science are both valuable and offer solutions. They do not need to be at odds but can instead inform and strengthen one another.

Culture: Losing touch with traditional and ecological knowledge has helped facilitate a more extractive and destructive orientation towards the River Yamuna.

Spirituality: Rituals performed respectfully can help bridge the modern disconnect between humanity and the sacred, and can lead towards ecological care and ecosystem restoration.

Lessons Learned & Passed On

1. The River Yamuna has lost its cultural and spiritual connection with many of the people who live on its banks and depend on its water, which in part, has led to it being polluted and desecrated.
2. Recognize the role of faith traditions to inspire and motivate people's care for nature. Faith leaders need to be included in conversations about sustainable development so traditional wisdom is also honored.
3. Encourage faith leaders to converse with other leaders and elected officials. Faith-based institutions have demonstrated the ability to undertake large development projects effectively.
4. Community-based conservation practices revitalize cultural heritage and cultivate cultural continuity by demonstrating the connection between humans and nature and culture.

This Restoration Effort has:

- Strengthened need for expanding climate adaptation practices that honor shared values & spiritual understandings.
- Helped identify related projects that could strengthen the community's decision-making process, peacebuilding practice, economic security.
- Established need for development opportunities that also honor culture, spirituality and rights of Nature.

UPDATE (January 2024):

The national government has partnered with city officials and industry to improve sewage and sanitation facilities. Local advocates and faith leaders have helped raise public awareness and initiated campaigns to clean the river. The Yamuna Biodiversity Park remains a sterling example of what is possible.

Adam Jones/flickr



Case Study on CITIES

MOMBASA, KENYA

THEME *Support Earth's regeneration; Expanding community peacebuilding; Creating public spaces to adapt to increasing heat*

Location & Concern Urban areas, full of life, are critical ecosystems requiring care as they become more overwhelmed by people and pollution. Mombasa is a dense, coastal city on the Indian Ocean, subject to high temperatures and in need of shade and green spaces. The city routinely floods after heavy rains, creating public health concerns with high rates of malaria and cholera. Christian, Muslim, and Hindu faith communities are working to establish green spaces and to expand mangrove and coral reef restoration efforts.

Consultation Partners Local faith representatives; World Evangelical Alliance (Faith NGO); Brain Youth Group (local NGO); and Environmental consultant.

Analysis

- **Echoes of colonization:** historic city planning racially and economically segregated access to green spaces.
- **Racial segregation:** less than 3% of Mombasa's land is publicly accessible green space; generations are disconnected from land, nature, ancestors and beliefs.
- **"Both/and" compromises:** Due to population growth, more housing is being constructed. Green spaces should be included in the design.
- **Urban planning:** expanding cities and rapid population growth must include equitable practices and provide green space.

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- **Think global/act local:** restoration efforts are felt by the community & the world (i.e., one mangrove tree absorbs 10 times more carbon than other trees).

Teachings on Values, Culture & Spirituality

Values: Everyone is entitled to just, equitable cities with accessible green space.

Culture: Pride of what makes us unique and a sense of belonging motivates us to protect our cities and green spaces.

Spirituality: People can find spiritual solace and comfort by having easy access to sacred and green spaces.

Lessons Learned & Passed On

1. We are dependent on natural and urban environments, in our creation stories and daily lives. Design natural and urban spaces to work together (i.e. green spaces provide cooling and increase livability).
2. Intergenerational participation in restoration projects passes ecological and local knowledge from one generation to the next.
3. Faith-owned properties are abundant in many cities. Ask faith communities to help steer urban design and development towards the common good.
4. In 1997, after destructive *El Niño* rains, residents who were experiencing hard times cut down mangroves to sell as firewood. More recently, hot water and waste disposal threaten replanted mangroves. Stakeholder education ensures project awareness and success.

This Restoration Effort has:

- Helped to identify related projects to strengthen the community's decision-making process and peacebuilding practices.
- Strengthened the community's disaster readiness.
- Created opportunities for collaboration with youth.
- Provided additional skills to help community in its work to restore degraded ecosystems.
- Helped to identify additional activities to help the community feel more support in a changing climate.

UPDATE (January 2024):

Restoration measures continue to save Mangrove forests. Youth activists and the wisdom of elders are being utilized to plant new trees while protecting those that already exist. Including the implementation of a "15-minute City" design strategy, the city of Mombasa has released a 25 year action plan to improve climate adaptation.

Case Study on SPECIES

MANILA, PHILIPPINES

THEME *Establishing more rights and recognition for Nature; Strengthening community's decision-making process, economic security*

Location & Concern In the Philippines, the Bagobo Tagabawa people are working with scientists and foundations to protect the critically endangered Philippine Eagle, a beloved relative in their community. The tribe's "forest guardians" are using tracking equipment to gather data on the eagles.

Consultation Partners Bagobo Tagabawa Tribe (Indigenous Representatives); DiversEarth (NGO); Philippine Eagle Foundation (Conservation NGO); Indigenous Peoples Rights International (NGO).

Analysis

- **Nature's guardians:** there are more than 460 million Indigenous people living around the world but only about 10% have legal recognition of their lands.
- **Life in harmony:** for those living in close relationship with nature and practicing traditional knowledge, the land is a hospital, a market, and a source of sacred relationships.
- **Healing relationships:** when we recognize that we are nature, we claim responsibility in keeping Earth and all creatures healthy for generations to come.
- **Combining strengths:** when conservation, science and Indigenous practices are combined, there is greater potential for the restoration project to succeed.
- **Unjust eviction:** many tribes have been unjustly evicted from their lands and

prohibited from completing cultural practices, many of which promote balanced & healthy ecosystems (i.e. controlled forest fires).

Teachings on Values, Culture & Spirituality

Values: For Indigenous communities, protecting home means protecting anything within the ancestral domain—animals and natural resources are part of home and heritage.

Culture: Indigenous conservation practices are culturally rooted and maintained by tribal elders and community members.

Spirituality: We are nature; and the forest is not "ours." When this understanding is broken, it is our sacred task to repair and restore the ecosystem and our relationship to it.

Lessons Learned & Passed On

1. Solutions must be holistic and not generalized. Place-based practices are needed. Understanding the cultural significance of a species can help us better protect it as part of our daily routines.
2. Culture-based governance approaches can capture how local communities see, understand and relate to biodiversity. Science-based knowledge and tools can be used in support of place-based conservation (e.g. forest guardians using tracking equipment to gather data on the eagles).
3. The rights of Indigenous communities must be recognized. Lands taken away from Indigenous people for development projects often leads to poverty and hunger for those who live, and stark biodiversity loss.

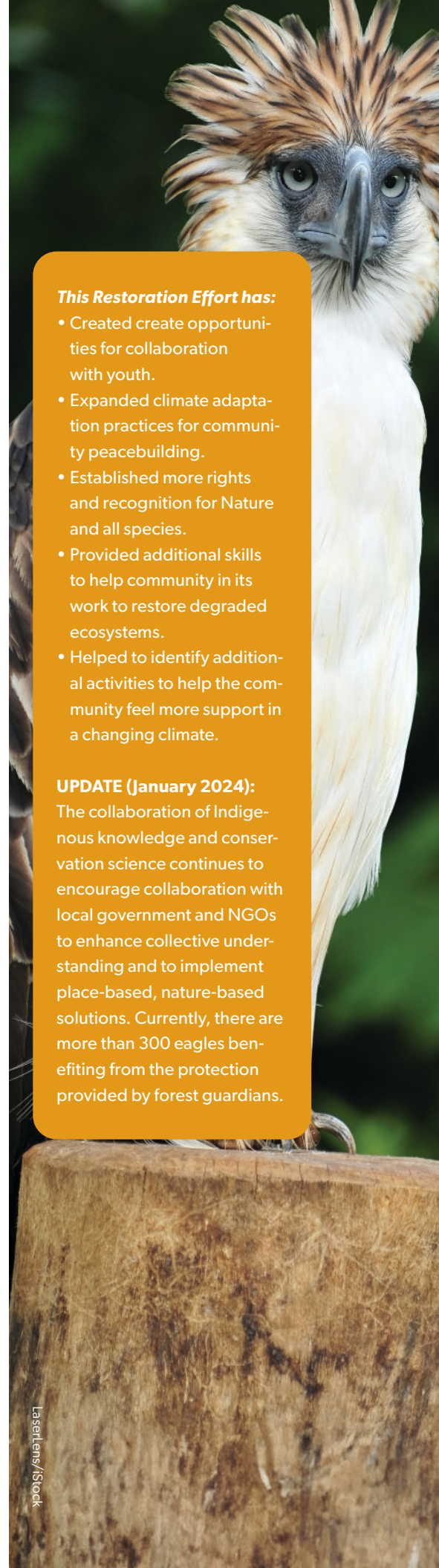
This Restoration Effort has:

- Created create opportunities for collaboration with youth.
- Expanded climate adaptation practices for community peacebuilding.
- Established more rights and recognition for Nature and all species.
- Provided additional skills to help community in its work to restore degraded ecosystems.
- Helped to identify additional activities to help the community feel more support in a changing climate.

UPDATE (January 2024):

The collaboration of Indigenous knowledge and conservation science continues to encourage collaboration with local government and NGOs to enhance collective understanding and to implement place-based, nature-based solutions. Currently, there are more than 300 eagles benefiting from the protection provided by forest guardians.

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Case Study on FOOD

AMMAN, JORDAN

THEME *Expanding climate adaptation practices for food security, disaster readiness and community peacebuilding*

Location & Concern Along with its neighbors in the Fertile Crescent, Jordan is home to some of the first domesticated crops and irrigation systems, which laid the foundation for modern agriculture. Presently, Jordan has merely one-fifth of the water it needs as the country continues to welcome many climate migrants and refugees from war.

Consultation Partners Governmental leaders; GlobalOne (International NGO); Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies (academia); TAYYŪN (local non-profit); and local activists.

Analysis

- **Ecosystems and culture:** our landscape significantly influences our identities and cultures, and the very food we eat.
- **Connectivity:** we cannot separate the degradation of the land and water from our treatment of one another.
- **Human Impacts:** upon examining the changes in the Jordanian landscape throughout history, it is clear that the cycle of aridity is human induced and influenced by the types of plants grown.
- **Faith and Ethics:** sacred texts and stories can propose a code of ethics. When we lose our connection to these ethics, it erodes morality.
- **Impacts of Colonialism:** historical narratives and records can reveal patterns of colonialism and imperialism which facilitated biodiversity loss.

- **Teamwork:** a common agenda and coordination among governments, institutions, NGOs, and individuals is essential.

Teachings on Values, Culture & Spirituality

Values: Our relationship with the environment is a reflection of how we value ourselves and other human beings. Restoring the environment is a manifestation of our care and love for each other.

Culture: The ancient (pre-Islamic) Hema system of conservation and growing certain plants is culturally-rooted, still offering guidance in the region, but is under threat by modern practices of over-consumption and materialism.

Spirituality: Nature allows us to understand religious concepts discussed in sacred texts, such as new beginnings and caring of God's creations. Our interactions with nature teach us about the world and our role in it.

Lessons Learned & Passed On

1. Food is a reminder that we need each other and other creatures for life to continue on.
2. One of our best strategies to combat food insecurity is to rebuild natural ecosystems. They are self-sustaining and stabilize soil fertility, water cycles, and pest-control mechanisms.
3. Looking at past approaches holds equal value with developing new innovations. It is through history that we can analyze what works and what does not.
4. Start by building networks around shared values. Begin with unity and understanding to help define our relationship with life and nature.

This Restoration Effort has:

- Expanded awareness of climate adaptation practices that honor shared values & spiritual understandings.
- Helped identify related projects that could strengthen the community's decision-making process, peacebuilding practice, food security.
- Established understanding that opportunities that also honor culture, spirituality and rights of Nature.
- Strengthened need for expanding climate adaptation practices that honor shared values & spiritual understandings.
- Upheld opportunities for youth and women-led collaboration.
- Strengthened relationship between economic opportunities and rights of Nature.

UPDATE (January 2024):

A joint agreement between Israel and Jordan has been signed to clean and rehabilitate the Jordan River. This initiative along with growing concerns of aridification and land degradation has inspired private-public partnerships to reestablish natural spaces, conserve water, and rejuvenate soil.

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CREDITS

This guide was created by the United Religions Initiative and the Center for Earth Ethics:

The Center for Earth Ethics (CEE) works at the intersection of values, ethics and ecology to confront the climate crisis. CEE works to change the dominant value system from one based on short-term material gain—no matter the pollution, depletion and inequity that result—to one based on the long-term health of the whole community of life. Through education, convening and advocacy, we engage individuals and communities to raise public consciousness as well as shift policy and culture.

Learn more at centerforearthethics.org

The United Religions Initiative (URI) is an international, interfaith organization supporting grassroots efforts to grow peace, justice and healing. Diverse groups, called Cooperation Circles (CCs), take up Earth restoration efforts, peace-building, and direct action to create safer, healthier, and more resilient communities. Using its broad network of CCs around the world, URI provides education, shares best practices, and promotes local interfaith action as integral to solving global and systemic problems. There are more than 1,000 CCs doing work in over 100 countries. URI is a non-profit and non-governmental organization with consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC).

Learn more about URI at uri.org

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